

ERIC

"Cynthia, Jr."

By E.J. Rupert

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INT. RADIO STATION BUILDING - STUDIO - EVENING

SUPER: "MILWAUKEE, WI - 20 YEARS AGO"

Music PLAYS in the background. DJ A-PLUS, 20's, black, and also known by his real name, Aloysius Allen, speaks in the microphone.

DJ A-PLUS

What's really good, ya'll? Welcome back to the show! DJ A-Plus here witcha. Now, coming in at Number 3 on "Alo's Wish List" is Less Than Jake!

He plays CANNED APPLAUSE.

DJ A-PLUS (CONT'D)

Number 2 is...Jake!

He plays CANNED APPLAUSE.

DJ A-PLUS (CONT'D)

And Number 1 on "Alo's Wish List" is Willie Jr.!

INT. CONCERT - BACKSTAGE DRESSING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

DJ A-Plus's voice PROJECTS from a boombox.

DJ A-PLUS (O.C.)

And he's in town right now on the second leg of his tour!

JUNIOR "WILLIE JR." NELSON, 20's, black, dons a sequined jumpsuit. His hair is in a box-cut, different from the afro he sports in the present day. He reclines in a chair, legs crossed, smoking a cigar, and munching on a bowl of chips. The bass player, PORTER, 20's, black, enters the room.

PORTER

Junior, man, the audience is waiting!

JUNIOR

Let them wait.

PORTER

Actually, some of them are starting to leave right now.

JUNIOR

Oh, hold on! I'm comin'!

He leaps out of his seat, brushes himself off, and races out of the room.

INT. CONCERT - CONTINUOUS

Junior slides on the stage to scattered APPLAUSE.

JUNIOR
What's up, Milwaukee!

He jumps up and yells on the microphone.

JUNIOR (CONT'D)
Don't call it a comeback, 'cuz me and my
band haven't gone nowhere!
(pause, thinks)
Yeah! Hit it, band!

The band PLAYS.

JUNIOR (CONT'D)
(sings)
Gimme some of that funky business! I want
some of your funky business!

A tall, black woman named TAMIKA runs up on stage and dances with him.

JUNIOR (CONT'D)
Oh, hey, girl!

TAMIKA
Oh my god, oh my god!

A bodyguard removes her from the stage.

JUNIOR
(regular voice, to himself)
Cool, that never happened before! Not
even from my girl!
(to Porter)
Porter, keep an eye out for that woman,
alright?

INT. CONCERT - BACKSTAGE DRESSING ROOM - LATER

Porter walks Tamika to the dressing room, where Junior packs up.

PORTER
Here's your biggest fan!

JUNIOR
You got that right!

He looks up to Tamika, who is a few inches taller than him and Porter.

TAMIKA
(lustfully)
Mr. Nelson, sir, I love you so much! Your music, your body, everything! Ooh, baby, you make me so hot!

JUNIOR
Okay, now, wow! You want my autograph?

TAMIKA
Yeah, sign my chest!

JUNIOR
Let me get a pen.

He turns and gets a pen. He turns back to Tamika, who has her shirt open.

JUNIOR (CONT'D)
Whoa! I was expecting you to just show your cleavage! Put those things up!

Tamika buttons her shirt.

TAMIKA
What, you don't like what you see?

JUNIOR
Oh, no, I do!

TAMIKA
Then there's more where that came from.

She approaches him.

JUNIOR
I've never seen anyone like you, uh...

TAMIKA
Tamika. Tamika Price.

JUNIOR
But you see, Tamika, I'm spoken for, and I promised to stay faithful.

TAMIKA
Oh, please. I read the internet. You'll have a new girlfriend next week.

JUNIOR

Dang, that wasn't supposed to leak yet. Listen, I'll tell you what. In about twenty years or so, if I'm single, and you're still single...

TAMIKA

Who said I'm single?

JUNIOR

Dang, you a "ryde or die" chick! Anyway, if we're still single after 20 years, we'll hook up. Alright?

TAMIKA

Fine. I gotta get home to my family, anyway. I'll see you around, Mr. Nelson.

She blows him a kiss, sways her hips while walking, and exits the room.

PORTER

Dang, she was all that and a bag of chips, Junior!

JUNIOR

Yeah, right! She seemed like a nut!

PORTER

Then why'd you give her that promise?

JUNIOR

Please! Nobody's ever serious when they make that promise!

PORTER

Yeah, you're right. You'll probably be married with kids, anyway.

JUNIOR

(scoffs)

Don't go there, Porter!

INT. BILLY AND RON'S APARTMENT - PRESENT DAY

SUPER: "MADISON, WI - TODAY"

Junior's oldest son, BILLY NELSON, 20's, sits on the couch and reads a magazine. Music PLAYS from a speaker. Two DISC JOCKEYS ANNOUNCE.

DISC JOCKEY #1 (V.O.)

Wrapping up our old school hour, that was Willie Jr.'s "Funky Business"! I wonder what kind of business Willie Jr.'s in now?

DISC JOCKEY #2 (V.O.)

Probably at a business fixing the shake machine!

SFX: RIM SHOT and CANNED LAUGHTER.

Billy smirks. The doorbell RINGS. Billy opens the door. A pizza guy stands there. He takes the pizza from him and shuts the door.

BILLY

Ron, pizza's here!

RON TYSON, 20's, black, runs out of his room to the pizza and grabs a slice.

RON

'Bout time, I'm starving!

VANKA, 30's, white, who is heavy-set and Russian, runs to the pizza as well.

VANKA

You got that right!

She takes a couple of slices. One slice remains.

VANKA (CONT'D)

What's on TV, boys?

She sits on a couch. Billy pulls Ron aside. They speak in hushed tones.

BILLY

Uh, Ron, why is she still here?

RON

You said you would talk to her!

BILLY

No, that was you!

RON

Oh yeah. But you can do it so much better than I can!

BILLY

I don't know what to say!

RON

Think of something! It's hard enough to bring any girls over here. What will they think when there's already a girl here?

BILLY

Maybe we're trippin'.

RON

Look, unless she looks like Keke Palmer, I don't want any girls living here! I gotta run.

Ron exits the apartment.

VANKA

(mouth full)

What's been goin' on, Billy? You guys have been acting strange.

BILLY

(regular voice)

Oh, no, Vanka! It's just that...

Billy's brother, ERIC, 16, bursts open the entrance with his luggage.

ERIC

Ayo, Billy, got any room for your favorite brother?

He takes the last slice of pizza from the box.

ERIC (CONT'D)

I see you got food!

Eric chomps on the pizza and walks towards the living room.

INT. HANGAR - OFFICE - DAY

SERGEANT DARIUS MURPHY, 30's, black, stands in the front of his junior soldiers who are seated, including SHANA JONES, 18, biracial.

MURPHY

Look, ya'll need to step it up! We can't have any more mess-ups on these flight records! The only good one I see was done by Private Jones! You could learn something from her!

Shana has her head down on the desk.

MURPHY (CONT'D)
Jones! Atten-hut!

Shana picks her head up.

SHANA
Oh, sorry about that, Sarge.

MURPHY
(to everyone)
Back to work.

The soldiers break. Murphy approaches Shana.

MURPHY (CONT'D)
Something you wanna talk about?

SHANA
It's nothing, Sarge. My dad's been getting on me and my husband about finding a house.

Murphy fidgets through some papers.

MURPHY
Well, shape up, soldier, 'cuz there ain't no crying in...
(shrieks)
Ow! Paper cut!

He drops his papers and kisses his finger. The office looks at him.

MURPHY (CONT'D)
...in the Army. Straight-up bad timing.

The office CHUCKLES.

MURPHY (CONT'D)
Yeah, yeah, ha ha, as you were!
(to Shana)
You really did a good job on that flight record. You're really catching on.

SHANA
Hey, when you give Private Jones a job to do, she does it. Periodt!

MURPHY
"Periodt", huh? What, you got some black in you?

SERGEANT VIVIAN HOPPER, 30's, black, sitting at a nearby desk, chimes in.

HOPPER

(to Shana)

His next question will be, "Want some black in you?"

MURPHY

Shut up, Viv, you had your chance!

Hopper sticks out her tongue at him.

SHANA

Actually, my mother was black.

MURPHY

Dang. I didn't know black people lived in Wisconsin!

They CHUCKLE.

SHANA

Whatever.

MURPHY

Well, keep up the good work. And if you need to talk, let me know.

SHANA

Thanks, Sarge.

MURPHY

(hushed tone)

Call me Darius.

He exits. Other female soldiers gather around Shana, including PRIVATE BANKS, 19, black.

BANKS

(to Shana)

Oooh, you better watch out for him, girl.

SHANA

What? Please, he knows I'm married.

PFC HYDE, 20's, white, chimes in.

HYDE

(chuckles)

Married in the Army? What's that?

BANKS

Yeah, my husband is probably screwing around right now!

HYDE

Those deployments can get lonely!

BANKS

Just be careful. But, dang, Darius is fine!

HOPPER

Finest man that ever knocked me up!

Murphy approaches them.

MURPHY

What's goin' on here, ladies?

LADIES

Nothing.

MURPHY

Hopper, as their superior, you should be making sure they work!

HOPPER

Don't talk to me like that, "Darius"! "You had your chance", remember?

The other ladies briefly CHUCKLE, then quickly STOP. Murphy walks away.

INT. BILLY AND RON'S APARTMENT - DAY

Eric, Billy, and Vanka all sit on couches in the living room.

ERIC

C'mon, Billy, you gotta let me stay here a while!

BILLY

The hell I do!

ERIC

But I traveled hours to get up here!

BILLY

It only takes 90 minutes from Milwaukee to here!

ERIC

(sighs)

Damn driver. And I gave him five stars.

BILLY
Your Uber driver ripped you off?

ERIC
No, "Gruber". I can't afford no Uber!

BILLY
Look, just go back home.

ERIC
No way! Then Mom and Matt will think that
I can't make it on my own!

BILLY
You can't!

ERIC
Hey, whose side you on?

BILLY
The side that has a home!

ERIC
How you gonna treat family like that?

BILLY
I don't treat family like anything!

Junior bursts open the door and slides to the floor, with
a boombox on his shoulder.

JUNIOR
What's up, son?

BILLY
(to Eric, signaling to
Junior)
Except for this fool.

Billy and Eric approach Junior.

BILLY (CONT'D)
Dad, what is it?

JUNIOR
Just seeing what's up. Eric, what are you
doing here?

ERIC
I live here!

BILLY
He does not!

VANKA
 (gasps)
 Are you Willie Jr.?

JUNIOR
 Uh, I don't owe you any alimony, do I?

VANKA
 No! I hear your music on TV all the time!

JUNIOR
 (smiles)
 Really?

VANKA
 Yeah! On those infomercials. I roll over
 remote on accident.

Eric and Billy CHUCKLE.

JUNIOR
 (to the boys)
 Alright, cool it. Eric, that's good news.
 Both of my sons here in Madison! I can't
 wait. Going out to Lake Mendota to fish.

ERIC
 Dad, we don't fish!

JUNIOR
 Huh? Oh, I was talking about me. You guys
 can come, too, if you want.

ERIC
 Dad, if you really wanna be a father for
 once, you could go down to the house. I
 left my phone there.

JUNIOR
 Will do. I'll see ya'll later! Good
 night, Madison!

He flips on his boombox.

DISC JOCKEY #1 (O.C.)
 Breaking news out of Milwaukee. Inmate
 Tamika Price has just broken out of
 prison!

DISC JOCKEY #2
 Of course, that would be considered news
 anywhere outside of Milwaukee!

SFX: RIM SHOT, CANNED LAUGHTER.

DISC JOCKEY #1

Anyway, she is considered armed and dangerous.

Junior changes the station to music PLAYING.

JUNIOR

Why does that name sound familiar? Well, later!

He dances to the music as he exits.

ERIC

So can I stay, Billy? It'll only be for a little bit!

BILLY

Fine, whatever! As long as I don't have to deal with any more family stuff today!

Billy's girlfriend, SHARON ROSS, 20's, black, and their baby boy, WILL, who speaks telepathically [*in italics*], enter.

SHARON

Hey, Billy, we need to talk.

Billy SIGHS.

WILL

Shoot, I need to talk! Gotta lot of stuff on my mind!

INT. CAR - DAY

Tamika drives in a dark car with tinted windows. There are pictures of Junior taped all around the car. Lit candles wrap around the car.

TAMIKA

Junior, baby, here I come!

She hits a bump in the road. A candle tips over and starts a fire.

TAMIKA (CONT'D)

Oh, not again!

She BLOWS the flames.

EXT. ARMY BASE - OUTDOORS - DAY

Shana and other soldiers, wearing workout gear, stand in front of SSG FLOYD PYE, 30's, white.

PYE

Alright, troopers, listen up. The battalion up in Madison needs some help. Some crazy pilots had a wild night, flew and crashed a plane into the hangar.

SHANA

Man, the Colonel's gonna get them!

PYE

(sighs)

Not if he was part of it. Anyway, it'll take months to clean up the mess, but it'll be good training. Any volunteers?

SILENCE.

PYE (CONT'D)

Don't all volunteer at once.

BANKS

The cable guy's supposed to be coming!

HYDE

I got a hair appointment next week.

PYE

Are you serious?

HOPPER

Well, I ain't got a life. I'll go.

PYE

(dryly)

The fighting spirit of you soldiers makes me emotional.

(normal voice)

I need two more volunteers. Decide by COB, or you'll be "volun-told"!

Pye exits.

MURPHY

Hey, I ain't like that.

(calls out)

Staff Sergeant, sign me up, too!

(to Shana)

Jones, what about you?

SHANA

Say what?

MURPHY

It'll look real good on your evals. And your fellow soldiers will look up to you.

SHANA

I'm 5'10". They already do.

MURPHY

Trust me, Jones. You should come, too.

He exits.

BANKS

(lustfully)

Oh, she will, all right!

HYDE

(lustfully)

But you gotta put the work in first!

Hyde mimics pelvic thrusts. Banks and Hyde CHUCKLE. Shana looks back at them, then looks at Murphy as he leaves.

INT. BILLY AND RON'S APARTMENT - DAY

BILLY

Alright, Sharon, what's the problem?

SHARON

I'm short of money since they closed down our restaurant!

BILLY

I thought that was only temporary.

SHARON

Well, it is until they can prove that we don't use tiger meat in our subs. But it's getting harder to pay rent.

BILLY

Dang, that sucks. I'll give you some more money when the first rolls around. Can't have you and my son out there bad.

Vanka gets up from the couch.

VANKA

Alright, time for me to take nap. Got to catch up before I go to bed tonight.

She goes to a bedroom. Eric gets up and goes to the kitchen.

SHARON

Who was that?

BILLY

One of Eric's friends. They're here visiting.

SHARON

You know, Billy, honey, if they or Ron get to be a bother, there's extra room at our place.

BILLY

Oh, I know what you're saying. Eric, did you hear that? Sharon has space for you!

ERIC

(rolls his eyes)

Yeah, I can't believe my ears.

SHARON

Uh, yeah, well, we better get going. Will has a playdate.

WILL

Stop calling it that! I'm hanging out with a girl I like. It's not a date at all!

BILLY

See ya later!

SHARON

Right.

Sharon and Will pass Ron as he enters.

RON

Hey, Sharon.

(to Billy)

Well, are we one roommate less?

Eric pulls milk out of the fridge.

ERIC

Fat-free milk? Your head's trying to lose weight, Billy?

Ron frowns at Billy, who CHUCKLES nervously.

INT. NELSON HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Junior enters the house.

JUNIOR
(calls out)
What's up, Nelson family?

He looks around.

JUNIOR (CONT'D)
Where is everybody?

The maid, CYNTHIA McNAIR, 30's, Puerto Rican, enters from the kitchen.

CYNTHIA
Oh, god, what do you want?

JUNIOR
(scoffs)
Not you. But I bet you hear that from all the men.
(chuckles)
Actually, I'm here to get...

CYNTHIA
Actually, I really don't care. Just get it quickly.

She returns to the kitchen. Junior points to the front door.

JUNIOR
You know that "Welcome" mat out there is false advertising!

SFX: Doorbell RINGS.

Junior opens the door. Tamika, wearing a buttoned-up coat, stands there and extends her arms.

TAMIKA
Willie, Jr., baby, I'm back!

JUNIOR
You're ba...?
(pause)
AAAARRRRRGHHH!

He SLAMS the door and runs from it. Cynthia races out of the kitchen.

CYNTHIA

What was that?

JUNIOR

Quick, Cynthia, pretend like we're married!

CYNTHIA

Okay, I want a divorce!

She turns around and begins to exit.

JUNIOR

No, wait, I'm serious!

CYNTHIA

I am, too! And you're so good at divorcing folks!

She begins to exit again.

JUNIOR

Woman, wait!

CYNTHIA

(sighs)

What are you talking about?

JUNIOR

I think this woman is after me!

CYNTHIA

Narrow it down.

JUNIOR

The woman at the door. She's a crazy fan who expects me to marry her!

CYNTHIA

Well, once she realizes who you are, she'll double back.

She begins to exit again.

JUNIOR

Cynthia, it'll only be for a moment! Just to shoo her away!

CYNTHIA

Junior, I don't wanna be involved in any of your foolishness!

JUNIOR

Wait here!

He walks to the door.

CYNTHIA

But...!

She SIGHS. Junior opens the door.

JUNIOR

Tamika Price? Forgive me. I was shocked to see you! How are you?

TAMIKA

You know, I've had better days, being on the run and all. But I came to see you! I haven't forgotten about our promise!

JUNIOR

Yeah, but remember that I said if both of us were single. You see, I'm married! There's my wife, Cynthia.

He points to Cynthia, who has her arms folded and eyes rolled.

TAMIKA

Oh, I see.

Cynthia's daughter, POLLY, 11, enters from the kitchen.

POLLY

Mom, what's going on?

JUNIOR

Oh, and see, this is our daughter, Patty!

CYNTHIA

"Polly".

JUNIOR

Whatever! Now, run along and play, Patty.

POLLY

Yeah, sure, but I need some money for the movies.

JUNIOR

(sighs)

All my marriages end up like this. Here.

He pulls out his wallet and flips through some bills. Polly grabs all of the bills from the wallet and exits.

JUNIOR (CONT'D)

See? Married with children, Tamika.
Sorry!

TAMIKA

Yeah, me too.

She rips open her coat. Junior GASPS. Cynthia walks over to them.

CYNTHIA

Hey, you can't be doin' all that flashing
and...

She GASPS. Tamika has a bomb wrapped around her with a BEEPING timer.

JUNIOR

You're wearing a bomb!

TAMIKA

And it'll go off any minute! Yeah, if I
can't have you, no one can!

JUNIOR

But what were you gonna do if I said I
was single?

TAMIKA

Then you and me would've died together,
just like in "Romeo & Juliet".

JUNIOR

Aww, how sweet.

Cynthia SLAPS Junior on the arm.

CYNTHIA

Junior!

INT. TIMMY'S PLACE - DAY - LATER

Eric and Billy sit at a booth in the restaurant. Shana and Banks, wearing their Army uniforms, approach their booth.

SHANA

Hey, Eric. Sorry for getting you kicked
out. No hard feelings?

ERIC

Nah, man! I fall down and get back up!

BILLY

And freeload off of someone else!

ERIC

The cycle keeps cycling! I'm living with Billy now, in Madison.

SHANA

So you're back to get your things?

ERIC

Yeah, my dad was supposed to bring me my phone, but he never did!

BILLY

I would've been surprised if he did.

Shana and Banks sit at the booth behind them.

ERIC

So what are you gonna do about Will and Sharon?

BILLY

Give 'em more money for rent, like I told her!

ERIC

And you don't think Sharon wants more than that?

BILLY

Hey, I can't think of nothing else, unless she wants to rent out a room.

Shana turns her head around.

SHANA

Rent out a room? I'll take it!

BILLY

Really? Why?

SHANA

I need to go up to Madison for training. Sharon's room will give me a place to stay!

BANKS

(slyly)

Oh, really?

SHANA

(to Banks)

Yes! That's the only reason I wanna go.
In fact, Jacob can come with me!

Sharon approaches Eric and Billy's booth with a bag.

SHARON

Alright, I got our food. Let's go. What
you guys talkin' 'bout?

BILLY

Hey, great news, Sharon! Shana and Jacob
are gonna share your place with you! That
way, they can help out with the rent!

SHARON

Oh. Great. I'm going to the car.

Sharon shakes her head and exits.

BILLY

(to Eric)

See? Problem solved!

ERIC

(rolls his eyes)

Yeah, that solved your problems!

BILLY

Yeah, that's what I said!

They both exit.

INT. NELSON HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - LATER

Cynthia and Junior sit on the couch. Tamika sits on the
love seat.

SUPER: "35:00" (WITH EACH SECOND TICKING AWAY)

TAMIKA

35 minutes, ya'll! Ready to die?

CYNTHIA

This was a great idea, Junior!

JUNIOR

How was I supposed to know she had a
bomb?

CYNTHIA
Hopefully Matt and Rhonda come back soon.

JUNIOR
Yeah, where are they, anyway?

CYNTHIA
Date night.

JUNIOR
(scoffs)
Talk about bad timing!

SFX: Doorbell RINGS.

TAMIKA
(to Cynthia)
You get the door. Any funny business and
I'll drop the bomb sooner than later!

Cynthia opens the door. Her ex-husband, PETER McNAIR,
30's, white, marches through.

PETER
Alright, where is he?
(to Junior)
You're the new hubby?

JUNIOR
Yeah, how are ya?

CYNTHIA
Peter, what are you doing here?

PETER
Polly said that you were married to this
guy right here!

CYNTHIA
And what if I am?

JUNIOR
Yeah! You can't even get your daughter's
name right! It's Patty!

CYNTHIA
Shut up, Junior!

PETER
I'll cut to the chase, Cindy. I want you
back, and I'll do whatever it takes!

Tamika closes the door and shows off her bomb to Peter.

PETER (CONT'D)

But I caught you at a bad time. I'll come back later.

He attempts to exit.

TAMIKA

(to Peter)

Sit down over there!

Peter sits with Junior and Cynthia.

CYNTHIA

Just great. Look at all the trouble you caused, Junior!

JUNIOR

Hey, I just came to pick up Eric's phone.

(pause)

Now that I think of it, once he sees that I haven't come back yet, he'll come down here to check up on me, and...

PAUSE.

CYNTHIA

Care to finish that?

JUNIOR

(sighs)

No.

EXT. NELSON HOUSE - FRONT PORCH - SAME

Eric, Billy, and Sharon approach the porch.

ERIC

Alright, let's get my phone and get outta here.

BILLY

Cool. I gotta help Sharon clear some space for Jacob and Shana.

SHARON

Yeah, about that, Billy, I was kinda hoping that you would move in with us.

The three of them stop before stepping on the porch.

BILLY

Me? Sharon, I don't know if I'm ready for that commitment.

SHARON

But you're ready to have a baby with me??

BILLY

No, I wasn't ready for that, either!

Sharon GROANS and storms away. Billy chases after her.

BILLY (CONT'D)

Sharon, wait!

ERIC

(laughs)

Nice going, bro!

Eric walks to the front door.

SFX: Muffled RINGING from his fanny pack.

Eric pulls his phone from it.

ERIC (CONT'D)

Oh, here's my phone! Man, I got Dad running around here for nothing!

(pause)

Oh well. He screwed me many times. Guys, wait up!

Eric walks away.

INT. DUMBECK MANSION - LIVING ROOM - DAY - LATER

Shana talks with her husband, JACOB JACKSON, 19, white.

JACOB

Madison? What makes you think I wanna stay up in Madison? And sharing a house with someone?

SHANA

Jakey, it'll only be for a couple of months, only until we can find our own place. Besides, I need to be there for Darius.

JACOB

Who?

SHANA

Darius Murphy. I need to be there for Sergeant Darius Murphy. I mean, I need to be there for our team!

JACOB

Then why don't you go? I'll just stay here!

SHANA

My family doesn't want you here!

Shana's father, JOHN DUMBECK, 40's, white, speaks from off-screen.

JOHN (O.C.)

This is true!

John enters with his daughter, and Shana's half-sister, ELEANOR DUMBECK, 17, white.

JACOB

Well, John, not that I care what you think, but it was my idea for us to move up to Madison.

JOHN

Oh really?

JACOB

Yeah. I know how to support your daughter.

Eleanor folds her arms.

ELEANOR

Mmm-hmm.

JOHN

Well, at least you guys have a plan. I'm glad.

John exits.

JACOB

Dang right we do!

ELEANOR

Mmm-hmm.

JACOB

Whatever, Eleanor.

Jacob exits.

SHANA

Yep, I need to help out my fellow soldiers! That's the only reason why I'm going!

ELEANOR

Mmm-hmm.

SHANA

"Mmm-hmm" what?

ELEANOR

(shrugs)

I dunno. What are we talking about again?

Shana walks away.

INT. NELSON HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - LATER

Cynthia, Junior, and Peter remain seated. Tamika walks around.

SUPER: "15:00" (WITH EACH SECOND TICKING AWAY)

PETER

Cindy, if this is the end of the line for us, just know that I always loved you.

CYNTHIA

Oh, please! It took me being taken by somebody else for you to even come down here!

PETER

Well, yeah! But listen: even when I'm doing it with other women, I'm still thinking about you, no matter how hard I try. And let me tell you, I've been doing it and trying and doing it and...

CYNTHIA

Alright, already!

TAMIKA

This is all very sweet. Willie Jr., that could've been us right there!

JUNIOR

It still could.

TAMIKA

But you're married to this girl!

CYNTHIA

No, he's not! He only said that to keep you away!

PETER

Really?

TAMIKA

So you lied to me, Willie?

JUNIOR

(sarcastically)

Oh, good plan, Cynthia!

CYNTHIA

Well, it's better than yours!

She gets up.

CYNTHIA (CONT'D)

You can't let this woman run your life!
You need to stand up and be a man!

JUNIOR

(sighs)

Maybe you're right. I...

CYNTHIA

Shut up, I ain't finished!

(to Tamika)

And the fact that this fool lied to you
should show that he don't wanna be with
you! So you need to move on!

(pause)

Back to jail, even.

TAMIKA

Huh. Maybe I went about this the wrong
way. Look, ya'll, I...

She walks by the front door. Eleanor rapidly opens the door and SLAMS Tamika against the wall, knocking her unconscious. She CRASHES into an end-table with a vase on it. The vase SHATTERS.

ELEANOR

Hey, guys, did you know my sister is
moving to Madison?

CYNTHIA

Eleanor, watch out! She has a bomb!

Eleanor looks at Tamika.

ELEANOR

Oh!

She walks up to her and FLICKS the switch from "ON" to "OFF". The bomb STOPS beeping.

ELEANOR (CONT'D)

(to Tamika)

My god, woman, you could've hurt yourself!

CYNTHIA

Quick, somebody tie her up!

Junior pulls out some rope from his pocket.

JUNIOR

Dang. Any other time, this would've been a thrill for me.

Junior approaches Tamika and ties up her wrists.

PETER

Cindy, I know we just been through a lot, but what do you say about you and me?

CYNTHIA

Look, call the cops first, and then we'll see.

Peter steps to the side with his cell phone.

JUNIOR

Wow, I wonder if any exes would ever come back to me?

ERIN DOOLITTLE, 16, black, who looks and dresses similar to Eric, runs in and falls to the floor. She quickly gets up.

ERIN

Is everyone all right?

JUNIOR

Erin Doolittle? What are you doing here?

ERIN

The news said that the escaped prisoner was at your house, and Mom wanted me to see if you were okay.

JUNIOR

But where is your mom?

ERIN

She was on the fence about you being in danger.

(MORE)

ERIN (CONT'D)

But she wanted me to come instead. At least we'd get a chance to know each other.

JUNIOR

What for?

ERIN

I'd rather let her tell you. Hey, I see you guys caught the prisoner.

ELEANOR

Yep, thanks to me!

Eleanor approaches Erin and repeatedly looks back and forth between her and Junior.

ELEANOR (CONT'D)

(to Erin)

You look like somebody I know. What's your name?

ERIN

Erin Doolittle.

Eleanor continues to look back and forth.

ELEANOR

Oh my god! You have the...same initials I do! Eleanor Dumbeck!

ERIN

Nice to meet you.

ELEANOR

Let's get a burger from Timmy's.

They both begin to exit.

CYNTHIA

You're trying to lose your new friend already, Eleanor?

Eric and Billy's mother and stepfather, RHONDA NELSON-JAMES and MATT JAMES, both 40's, enter the house.

ELEANOR

Hey, Mr. and Mrs. "Nelson-Jamisez". We were just leaving.

CYNTHIA

Guys, I can explain.

MATT

All I heard was that ya'll were leaving.

RHONDA

Look at this mess, Cynthia.

MATT

Yeah, what did you do, sit around all day?

Matt and Rhonda walk upstairs. Peter returns to Cynthia.

CYNTHIA

Peter, are the cops coming?

PETER

Yeah, I talked to Officer Townsend.

CYNTHIA

Great. I'll call somebody else.

OFFICER YVETTE TOWNSEND, 40's, black, a short, big-boned lady, enters.

OFFICER TOWNSEND

Har, har, Cynthia, I'm right here!

She puts handcuffs on Tamika.

OFFICER TOWNSEND (CONT'D)

Any other time, you Milwaukeeans take the law into your own hands, but not while I'm gettin' my Tubi on!

PETER

(to Cynthia)

So, whatcha say?

Tamika begins to wakes up. Townsend drags her towards the exit.

TAMIKA

I guess I'm going back to jail. Willie Jr., I'm sorry things didn't work out.

JUNIOR

Well, maybe in a few years, when you get out, and I'm single...

CYNTHIA

That's it! Everybody out! Now!

Cynthia pushes the four of them out and SLAMS the door.

SFX: Off-screen LOUD EXPLOSION! KNOCK on the door.

JUNIOR (O.C.)

Uh, Cynthia, can we use your phone?

Cynthia locks the door, shakes her head, and walks away.

INT. SHARON'S APARTMENT - DAY

Jacob, Shana, and Eleanor carry some boxes inside.

SHANA

Eleanor, you gonna do okay without me?

ELEANOR

As long as I can have your room.

SHANA

Fine, you can have my room. But not my village. I might come back for some weekends.

ELEANOR

Dang! Well, see you guys later.

She hugs Shana and exits. Sharon enters from her room, walking behind Shana and Jacob.

JACOB

I don't get it, Shana. You made me leave my drill team class!

SHANA

Aw, it wasn't even a real job! Besides, you can do the same thing up here.

JACOB

But I don't know or like anybody here!

SHANA

Which is why you came home from Billy's party high?

SHARON

What??

Shana turns to her and covers her mouth.

JACOB

Oh, please. I wasn't the only one. His roommate was, too.

Shana pretends to CLEAR HER THROAT.

SHARON

Oh, really?

JACOB

Yeah! And Eric, and that big girl that lives there!

Shana pretends to CLEAR HER THROAT again. Sharon GROANS, exits the apartment, and SLAMS the door.

SHANA

Honey, what do you think...
 (pretends to clear her
 throat)
 ...means? I ain't got no cold!

Will sits in his playpen.

WILL

Dang. Even I know that.

INT. BILLY AND RON'S APARTMENT - DAY

Eric and Vanka sit in the living room and watch TV. Billy and Ron sit in the kitchen.

ERIC

You look familiar. What's your name again?

VANKA

Vanka. We met at that bachelor party. We were, as you Americans say, "blazin' it up."

ERIC

Oh yeah! How were you able to live here all this time?

BILLY (O.C.)

Yes!

He and Ron race to them.

RON

That's exactly what we wanna know!

BILLY

Vanka, the bachelor party was weeks ago. You cool and all, but why are you still here?

VANKA

My dance partners left me and went back home. I don't want to go back there, anyway. Want to start new life in land of the free.

RON

But?

VANKA

But I can't find job. I enter name on social media, Vanka Smirnov, and people either think I'm a bot or a thot!

RON

Well, we already have too many people living here. And I need to focus on passing this class!

He waves his textbook. Vanka reads the title of it.

VANKA

"Russian Literature"? Ron, you do know that I'm from Russia?

RON

So? I'm from Illinois, and I don't know everything about the state!

VANKA

I was very good in school back home.

RON

How good?

Vanka takes the book, opens the front cover, and directs Ron to a page. He reads from it.

RON (CONT'D)

"Written by Vanka Smirnov, Ph.D."
(to Vanka)
Okay, you can stay.

BILLY

Alright, so me and Ron will still share a room, Vanka has my room, and Eric, you sleep on the couch. I think this temporary arrangement can work.

Sharon bursts open the door and SLAMS it.

SHARON

(to Billy)

William Patrick Nelson, III, you'd rather live with another woman than live with me? And then you want our son to be here with your pothead brother and pothead roommate? In what universe would I think that's okay?

ERIC

(to Billy)

"Temporary" is right!

VANKA

(to Billy)

Don't forget to "right" [write]!"!

They both CHUCKLE. Billy shakes his head.

THE END